

Nobody Wants to Talk About It, but What If...A Charter School Has To Close?

It is the position and philosophy of the State Board of Education, Division of Charter Schools that we work together to provide the technical assistance necessary for our charter schools to remain in compliance with all state and federal laws and as well as their Charter (aka contract). Blatant compliance violations and indifference to our requests to take positive action are just two ways that a “*Notice of an Intent to Revoke*” a charter may be requested of the State Board of Education.

Unfortunately, a charter school may find itself in the position of being forced to close, not due to the issuance of a “*Notice of an Intent to Revoke*”, but due to other situations, such as:

- Overestimation of student count, as compared with the actual count at the 40th day. (This “average count” will immediately affect the funding amounts and drop payments to below what is expected, or even to zero should the difference be that great).
- No financial “cushion” if there are no payments coming from ADE for several months.
- Financial insolvency over time.
- Extensive debt upon opening of the school, or remodeling of the school, with no financial “cushion” should things go awry or be delayed.
- Unwise financial decisions during the year with no “cushion” to absorb any loss.
- Financially sound on paper, but no liquid assets readily available should state funding come to a halt.

If a school finds itself in any such position and feels there is a possibility of having to close, even if it means sometime in the future, certain things need to be put in place before that happens in order to protect the students.

- Notify your sponsor as early as possible. Don’t be afraid to discuss the problem with them. The sponsor may be of assistance.
- If closing the school appears imminent: Notify the parents or guardians of your students in a timely manner. Offer placement of the students to other equivalent chartered or non-chartered schools.
- Provide parents with packets (including signed withdrawal slips, copies of grade reports, discipline records, immunization records, etc.) for each child enrolled at your school so that transfers to other schools will be less disruptive.

- Provide your sponsor with lists of students in each grade level and the classes they have completed. ***This is especially important with our high schools to provide continuity of grade reports and graduation credits.***
- Provide your sponsor with a contact name, address and telephone number to be used as a representative of the school.
- Provide your sponsor with the location of all school records. Just as with income tax documents, it is required that you, as the charter operator, be responsible for all student records for a period of five to seven years.